

- (iv) The present analog microwave link between Agartala to Silchar is planned to be replaced by digital media to further improve the STD service.

B. BIRBHUM : The following development activities have been planned during 97-98.

- (i) Total capacity expansion by 5000 lines.
- (ii) Provision of 4500 new telephone connections.
- (iii) Provision of 550 village public telephones.
- (iv) Provision of 150 STD PCOs and 80 local PCOs.
- (v) Commissioning of 8 new telephone exchanges.
- (vi) Extension of STD facility to 11 more exchanges through reliable media.

#### Telecast of Matches at DD

358. DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Doordarshan is giving less importance to telecast football and Hockey matches of the country as well as international matches;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps to be taken to allot more time to telecast these matches ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) to (c) It is Doordarshan's endeavour to telecast all major National and International sporting events including hockey and football matches where-ever telecast rights are made available to it. As a result of signing an agreement with the Indian Hockey Federation (IHF) and acquiring telecast rights, Doordarshan has been able to telecast almost all major hockey matches/tournaments played in the country in the recent past. Earnest efforts are being made by Doordarshan to sign similar agreements with All India Football Federation (AIFF) and other Sports Associations.

#### Gauge Conversion

359. SHRI UDDHAB BARMAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the names and length of the narrow/metre gauge sections under Northeast Frontier Railway converted into broad-gauge so far;

(b) whether all the converted lines gets clearance for running of goods and passenger trains;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the names of those sections where passenger as well as goods trains have started plying;

(e) whether the Government are considering for introduction of passenger services from those section to other parts of the country; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASVAN) : (a) (i) Guwahati-Dibrugarh (559 kms.)

(ii) Tinsukhia-Lekhapani (64 kms.)

(iii) Chaparmukh-Haibergaon (25 kms.)

(b) Yes, Sir

(c) and (d) Goods trains are running on all the above converted sections. But Passenger trains are running only on Guwahati-Dibrugarh and Chaparmukh-Haibergaon sections.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) 1. 4055/4056 Delhi-Dimapur Brahmaputra Mail has been extended to Dibrugarh Town/Tinsukia.

2. 2423/2424 Guwahati Rajdhani will also be extended to Dibrugarh Town once a week.

3. 5659/5660 Howrah-Guwahati Kamrup Express will be extended to Dibrugarh Town.

4. An overnight service will be introduced between Guwahati and Tinsukia.

#### Attachment of AC-II Coaches with Howrah-Chennai Mail

360. SHRI RUP CHAND MURMU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to increase AC-2 coaches with Howrah-Chennai Mail;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that passengers are not getting more accommodation due to less number of quota allotted to and from Calcutta in the AC-2 class;

(d) if so, whether the Government are going to fulfill